

**SUMMARY OF THE
PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
AUGUST 07, 2002**

The Program Policy and Structure Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Wednesday, August 7, 2002, at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). Chairperson Dr. Kenneth Jackson of the New York State Department of Health led the meeting. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. The purpose of the meeting was to address the agenda items as follows.

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Jackson called the meeting to order and took attendance.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes from the July 09, 2002, NELAC 8 Conference were reviewed and approved as amended.

REVIEW OF POST-NELAC 8

Dr. Jackson reviewed revisions to the proposed changes that were made at the Conference. The glossary definitions for *Field of Accreditation* and *Field of Proficiency Testing* were both withdrawn. The proposed deletion of analyte groups was also withdrawn. It was noted that, during the voting session, a further revision was made to Constitution and Bylaws under Article VI, Section 3, which states:

C. Standards Review Committee. This committee shall:

... present its evaluation and recommendation in a written or electronic report to the membership at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting and make this report available to the public...

FUTURE PLANS

A letter was sent to Silky Labie from Henry Longest, USEPA, requesting changes to the Constitution and Bylaws concerning the duties of the Director and Executive Secretary to NELAC. The request for changes was not presented in time to propose for voting at NELAC 8. Consequently, the proposed changes that were to be voted on at NELAC 8 concerning the duties of these positions were redirected to NELAC 9, pending EPA's explanation of their duties.

Dr. Jackson commented that there would be various language changes in Chapter 1 of the NELAC Standards reflecting the adopted revisions to the Constitution and Bylaws regarding responsibilities of various Committees.

Gary Bennett volunteered to assume responsibility concerning changes that will be made to the Standards glossary. Due to ISO17025 implementation, the Committee anticipates numerous proposed changes to the glossary. Mr. Bennett will contact all committee chairs before NELAC 8i to acquire changes they have generated; thus, compiling a list to circulate to all committees stating the proposed changes to the glossary.

Dr. Jackson noted that the most urgent issue for the Committee was to determine the structure, policies and operations of the new Standards Review Committee and to resolve policy changes due to the restructuring of NELAC.

STANDARDS REVIEW COMMITTEE

The following suggestions were made during a preliminary discussion of the role and responsibilities of the Standards review Committee.

- The Standards Review Committee should work in close cooperation with any standards development organization.
- Dr. Jackson received a letter from Pat Conlon (STL-Pittsburgh), which he read to the Committee. It was decided that the letter presented several good ideas and it may be appropriate to invite Mr. Conlon to be a guest at a future teleconference to discuss his ideas.
- This committee will review all submitted standards. If the committee considers a standard to be unsuitable as written, it should work with the standards-development organization, asking it to appropriately revise the standard. All submitted standards should then be presented for consideration by the Conference together with the committee's comments, concerns and recommendations. If the Conference does not adopt a standard the Committee will return the proposal to the standards-development organization with documentation of reasons it was not adopted.
- It was discussed that Chapter 1 of the Standards would be the appropriate place for the duties of the Standards Review Committee to be stated.
- A suggestion was made that the Standards Review Committee should solicit standards from standards development organizations. There should also be a timeframe for the Committee and the standards development organization to follow; thus, preventing long delays in the process of standards implementation. A suggestion of six months between standards being presented and voted upon was discussed.
- There will be 12 members from the NELAP Accrediting Authorities and 10 other members to serve on the Standards Review Committee. It was suggested that each NELAP Accrediting Authority would nominate a member, and the remaining at-large members would be solicited and appointed through the normal NELAC appointment process.

- An issue was raised regarding subcommittees within the Standards Review Committee. Members felt that subcommittees might complicate the matter because of the large size of this Committee. However, the members felt that subgroups appointed from within the committee may work efficiently.
- Dr. Jackson will prepare a rough draft of language for Chapter 1 of the Standards regarding operations of the Standards Review Committee and this will be discussed during the next teleconference.

FUTURE TELECONFERENCES

The next teleconference will be Wednesday, September 4, 2002, at 11:00 a.m. EDT.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

**ACTION ITEMS
PROGRAM POLICY & STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
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Item No.	Date Proposed	Action	Date to be Completed
1.	08/07/02	Mr. Bennett will assume the responsibility of the glossary and will solicit proposed changes generated from each Committee chair before NELAC 8i.	Ongoing
2.	08/07/02	Dr. Jackson will prepare a rough draft of language for Chapter 1 of the Standards regarding the operations of the Standards Review Committee.	09/04/02

**PARTICIPANTS
PROGRAM POLICY & STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
AUGUST 07, 2002**

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